

Written for this Paper.

THE DRIFT OF THE TIME.

This is an age of statistics. Governments, commercial organizations, and leading business houses make it a matter of interest to collate generally or individually, everything which relates to their special requirements or interest. That some speculate, pervert, misuse or abuse the information thus obtained, is of small account, compared with the benefits which are general, the knowledge which is valuable; and tables, calculations, etc., which, when official or authoritative, affect not only the commerce of the world, but each individual consumer and producer. These figures represent results. They suggest, encourage, steady the market for both buyer and seller, particularly the great, grand, universal staples of every home, from the highest to the lowest.

If not always absolutely reliable, nay if made "tollie," as figures sometimes are, they are really the barometer of trade. Every phase of supply and demand is noted thereon, and nothing which affects this showing from war to weather is overlooked by these "watchmen on the walls" of trade. Cyclone storms, rains, drouth, insect, blight, contingent or possible, enter into these obscure and to most persons uninteresting columns of figures.

Farmers, with their grain, hay, eggs, butter, stock, are all tabulated; as are the products of the ranchman whose education leads him to sheep and wool, to cattle and beef, to horses and hider. Everything done by the raiser of fruit from the humblest to the highest is estimated; the proximate quantity and value of grapes, oranges, lemons, peaches, apples and berries, all of which when appearing in the aggregate thus combined only bewilder and make us astonished by their importance and immensity as well is determined.

One of the remarkable features of figures and products thus considered is the interdependence of state upon state and nation upon nation. Take the item of eggs as an illustration. How few recognize, save the statistician and dealer, the importance and immensity of supply or consumption. It is claimed that nine hundred million dozen eggs are laid by the hens of the United States, which at the average of fifteen cents a dozen means a total value of one hundred and forty million dollars, or two dollars per head for every citizen we have. Not content, however, with this amazing home supply there was obtained from Canada alone last year nearly fourteen million dozen, to say nothing of supplies from elsewhere.

Now this annual home crop of eggs exceeds in value the entire national product of iron and wool, about which so much is said from time to time; the value of the first being estimated at from seventy-five to eighty million dollars, and the latter (wool) at between fifty and sixty millions. Verily as the Englishman says, so may we say: "Heggs is heggs" anyway; and he forsooth imports annually from Denmark the astounding total of one hundred and sixty millions or nearly fourteen million dozen.

Interesting as this topic is in this aspect, but one more illustration ex-

hibiting the growth of an industry and we must give way for other, and primary thoughts. Every one realizes to some extent the fruit value of our near neighbor, the Golden State. She began as it were but the other day to grow citrus fruits, but last season she sent into her sister states five thousand three hundred carloads of oranges, to say nothing of lemons, for which we have been indebted to Italy, Europe, annually, for the enormous supply of two and three-quarter million boxes, of three to three hundred and sixty lemons per box. And even the insignificant strawberry rolls into the Chicago market from a very small radius some hundreds of carloads every season. These are among the smaller items, important in their way no doubt, but as the dust in the balance to the incalculable products (save by figures) of wheat, corn, sugar, pork, beef, fruit, butter, cheese, poultry, potatoes, etc., all raised from the soil; to say nothing of food supplies from the seas and rivers, or the manufactured products of foundries, factories, great, small or diversified, as they minister to the almost infinite demands and necessities of our own nation, and wherever enterprise can find a market or create an exchange.

If the internal and external commerce of this nation were summarily suspended, that experience alone would show how intertwined are the sources of supply and the machinery for distribution. Most people know something of the vast array of middlemen who line the highway of assumed convenience between the producer and consumer, not that large army of brokers, agents, drummers, commission men and wholesale houses; but they know more of that infinite host of retailers who come in direct contact with the consumer, who pays for all. You find them on every street and in every neighborhood, of all grades and qualities, pretentious and otherwise, but under methods apparently all needed for convenience if not for profit.

The wants of sixty-five millions are not easily supplied. Consumption is continuous, and hundreds rush into this branch of distribution (or store-keeping as it is called) without any understanding of the primary elements of business to say nothing of success. To distribute is considered easy; to handle the products of the farm and factory is considered a way of living, requiring but little thought, intelligence or preparation; dollars enough to buy a stock or credit enough to secure it, is deemed the one thing needful, and so the rank of this class are multiplied *ad infinitum*.

Failures occur among this class with a rising frequency, and they average in this country over five hundred per month; or for the first six months of this year of 6,659, with liabilities involving eighty-nine million dollars. This as against 7,030 failures with liabilities of over one hundred million dollars during the first six months of last year. It is inferred from this and other symptoms that the times are improving. Indeed, almost every branch of trade evidences more or less of a reaction from the torpid times of the last three years.

What proportion these failures and los-

ses bear to the whole, constitutes of course, the whole test. Certain it is, however, that vast sums are annually lost in trade; that these failures represent but a tithe of that which is covered by bad debts down to the lowest grade, and losses from ignorance, changing values, serious enough when failure is avoided or overcome.

It is believed that comparative tables would show Utah far below the average. Her business men are conservative. Her population means to pay their debts. Retrenchment and caution have been universal and failures very few; wool, wheat and stock, her three great staples outside of mining, have all advanced in price; and her population can live through a panic which would prostrate a less thrifty, independent and self-sustaining community. All the prospects for crops are today immense, so that while feeling after eastern capital for internal development and the establishment of factories of one kind and another, these are simply retarded by the nature of the population, who with plenty, yet without monied surplus, are only waiting for "the tide to turn," dependent as all other communities are upon the great outside world for some things, that is very much modified here by local training and by that philosophy of economies which concludes to do without everything that it cannot conveniently reach.

So while from every section of the several states comes the assurance of improved financial conditions, while old factories are starting and new ones being built, while iron, leather, lumber, livestock, cotton, wheat, railroads and banks may be advancing in price, and losing the purse strings, no excitement centers in Utah on the outlook whether it improves or otherwise. If the masses are not exactly in the condition of the man who "didn't care which way the wheel turned he was bound to go up," there is an underlying faith that many things are as they are for educational purposes, and they believe that the remainder will be made to yield its harvest of good to those who look in that direction.

As a unit in the great federation of states and nations, the old Utonians at least are not counting much on peace. They do not seek to be hopelessly intertwined with conditions and coming events which "cast their shadows" even now. They anticipate trouble, they look for overthrow, they expect disturbance in trade, and they are assured that equilibrium can be maintained only by wisdom more than human, and that whatever may arise it will, through the crucible of divine purpose, assuredly inure to the peace, preservation and salvation of those whose hearts are not set on the gods of this world, or on riches which "take to themselves wings and fly away."

FREE SILVER COINAGE.

HONOLULU, Hawaii,

July 1, 1895.

By your kind permission I will pursue the above subject a little further.

If the government should adopt a free and unlimited coinage of silver as a settled policy, then take charge of the coin and issue certificates for it, the care of it must in the course of